

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON CURRENT TOPICS—COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

Ignorance or Wickedness.

From the N. Y. Times. The question is said to be debatable, whether that portion of the President's message which discourses the payment of the national debt is the product of ignorance or dishonesty. Either conjecture may be upheld with a certain degree of probability. The details of the argument—if so it may be called—evince a contempt for the accuracy of financial statement which is only explainable on the ground of ignorance.

When, for example, Mr. Johnson declares that "the consideration which the Government has actually received for its bonds" "was in real money 300 or 400 per cent. less than the obligations which it issued in return," he talks nonsense. What he intended to say we may imagine. He meant, we suppose, that the obligations issued by the Government are 300 or 400 per cent. in excess of the coin received therefor—which, though a false statement, would not be absurd, whereas the literal meaning of what he does say is, that the Government received for its bonds 200 or 300 per cent. less than nothing!

More ignorance and absurdity, however, form an inadequate explanation of the President's course. The blunder of his statement renders him ridiculous, but its import is sufficiently coherent to convict him of a total want of moral principle. Precisely how he desired to go about the robbery we are left to guess, but that he deliberately intends to commit robbery cannot be doubted. The World, in an apologetic way, explains that he designs "to treat the debt, not after the manner of a court of law enforcing the strict construction of a contract, but after the manner of a court of equity aiming to do substantial justice."

This is the ordinary cant of the Democratic repudiators. They don't propose robbery, forsooth; they simply want equity. So Mr. Pendleton has a strong declaration. So the Democratic Convention declared last July. And doubtless Mr. Johnson will be glad to avail himself of the World's friendly explanation. The fact remains, however, that Mr. Johnson has gone ahead of Mr. Pendleton and the Democracy. They were willing to pay interest in coin because the bonds so stipulate; they insisted only that the principal be paid in greenbacks. He, on the other hand, proposes to stop the interest altogether, and to use the amount semi-annually in liquidation of the principal.

The belief that Mr. Johnson's aim is to damage the public credit is strengthened by the concurrent attack of his Secretary of the Treasury upon the greenback currency. Mr. Johnson assails the debt; Mr. McCulloch assails the legal-tender notes. One seeks blank repudiation; the other greenback depreciation. In a certain sense, the two propositions run side by side. Their tendency, if in any manner operative, is to damage the national credit.

The message, however, has oversteered the mark. Instead of injuring the public credit, it has simply disgusted all men with Mr. Johnson. The only repudiation he will witness will be the repudiation of himself and his schemes; and the country will have reason to thank Providence for the deliverance.

H. G. as Envoy to England.

From the N. Y. World. We really begin to believe that H. G. means to leave. Not, of course, for that home from which no traveller returns; for "the good man," Callimachus tells us, "never dies"; and if H. G. be not a good man, there are neither snakes in Virginia, Copperheads in New York, blockheads in the Loyal League, nor Ku-Klux in Tennessee. But we believe that H. G., knowing himself to be an honest man, and likely therefore to command confidence, has agreed "to be abroad for the good of the commonwealth."

Stoner has endeavored to induce H. G. to accept the post of American Envoy to the Court of St. James. Was this the object of the wily people who persuaded our philosopher to breakfast on fillet of beef and to smoke a maternal cigar the other day at Delmonico's with the President elect? We do not pretend to know.

But the Tribune of late has been full of signs and wonders, all pointing one way, and evidently intended to prepare the public mind for the appearance of the sage of Chapapaqua in the role of an ambassador. One of these, for instance, was the speech of H. G. himself, delivered at the meeting recently held in this city to secure the pardon of Hester Vaughan. Those who know how ardent a philologist H. G. is, and how forcibly it was his wont in former days to declaim against the gallews, must have been surprised at the gingerly and guarded way in which he pleaded at that meeting for mercy to the hapless Hester. Not one of the Capital Letters which he has at his command for all the ordinary contingencies of life and of politics did he order up to hurl against this gross abuse of Capital Punishment. He seemed to be suffering under a positive constipation of adjectives, never so much as intimated that he thought hanging the poorest use to which a woman could be put had nothing to say about the "villany" of anybody concerned in the matter, and wound up, after a singularly brief harangue, by remarking that "he did not think it wise to say any more."

All this, from the stand-point of H. G.'s past career, was unaccountable enough. But the moment that we consider him in the light of a skilful diplomatist the thing becomes perfectly clear. He was simply practising himself in the great diplomatic art of "how not to say it."

Stanley has been sowing. The snubbed and unappreciated junior partner of the former political firm of Weed, Seward, and Greeley, seems to have his revenge at last on his deceitful and greedy seniors. To take away with himself the credit and glory of settling the Alabama claims will be the best imaginable way of vexing the subtle and selfish soul of Seward, and will send that venerable statesman back to Auburn in a more dismal and crabbed dejection than when he returned from Chicago in 1860 as the great unominated.

Still another symptom, and one of the most decisive, is the enthusiastic zeal which the Tribune has displayed for the success of Mr. Gladstone in the recent English elections. On certain days, indeed, it has been really difficult to decide whether the Tribune was an American radical newspaper edited in London, or an English Liberal newspaper edited in New York. And what but the approaching presentation of H. G. at the British Court can explain the extraordinary assertion which the Tribune has just made that Admiral Farragut found all the rights of American citizens respected in Great Britain; or its not less extraordinary proposition (extraordinary, we mean, as coming from such a source) that the President of the Fenian Congress is not a proper person to be sent as American Consul to Leeds?

We repeat, the thing is settled. H. G. is to be our next representative at the Court of Queen Victoria. And, after all, why not? It is true that H. G. has already made one experiment at diplomacy with no very brilliant results. But he went as envoy to meet the Confederate commissioners at Niagara without proper credentials, and there are abundant reasons for believing that if Mr. Lincoln would only have accredited him with full powers to the government of Jefferson the day after the first battle of Bull Run, we should have had peace at once and at any price.

Moreover, as envoy to the British Court at this particular time, H. G. will not be called upon to do much more than is expected of those valuable young men who are invited to evening parties for the purpose of diffusing a genial air through the assembly by "standing around and smiling." He will find all the knotty questions at issue between the countries quite disentangled, and, after setting his seal to the work of his predecessors, nothing practically will remain for him but to write evasive letters to Geo. F. Train, to give good dinners and eat them, to dress well, to dance occasionally with the Princess of Wales and other young ladies of rank, to make agricultural speeches in the rural districts and commercial speeches at the Lord Mayor's banquets, to quote Shakespeare and the laws of Saxon Alred, to weep on the tombs of "a common ancestry," and generally to make himself literary, poetical, and agreeable. Is there one of these duties to which H. G. can justly be considered incompetent? It may possibly be thought that the great breeches question will trouble him. But, in the first place, it has already been settled by her Majesty's chamberlain that if the American Minister chooses to come to court in a short-waisted blue coat with brass buttons, a red and white striped waistcoat, and nankin trousers riding high up his republican legs, with a fluffy white hat set far back upon his manly brow, and a green cotton umbrella tucked under his resistless arm, everybody will be delighted to see him. And, in the second place, the chances all are that H. G., when he gets to England, will insist on wearing a court suit of velvet, or at the very least an embroidered uniform. Now that the Quaker John Bright is about to appear at the levees of his sovereign in the blue and silver of a cabinet minister, we may depend upon it that H. G. will rejoice to prove himself also to have a soul above buttons. In our opinion, he has been all his life-long misunderstood in this matter of costume. We believe him to be a real clothes-philosopher, who has dressed himself not from a mere sense of duty, but with a just æsthetic eye to moral effects and social influences. Such a man, if sent to the King of the Feejee Islands, would need no carpet-bag; while if sent to the Queen of Great Britain, we may depend upon it that he will tax the genius of Poole to its utmost stretch of inventive ingenuity to make him "beautiful forever." Bless him—let him go!

The Spanish Revolution.

From the N. Y. Herald. Our latest news from Europe regarding the revolution in Spain shows that that country is no exception to the general rule. Revolutions have their peculiarities one and all, but it is wonderful how like the one is the other. On this continent we have a sharp way of settling what Europe calls a revolution; but then they are a new people, and new people have new ways. On the other side it is curious to notice how old-fashioned all their ways are. The Spanish revolution is the first thing of the kind which has happened in Europe since our four years' struggle. Spain began well; but, so far as we can judge from present appearances, Spain is away back in the sixteenth century, and has yet all essential lessons to learn. She wants men; she wants everything. One conclusion at least seems to be fair—Spain is to be left to work out her own destiny. It may be a long work; it may be a short work. Who can tell which? This at least seems just—no one is disposed to meddle with her; and, as was the case with the great revolutions in England and in France, Spain is very likely to be allowed to work out her own destiny. If Spain makes a bungle of it, the fault will be her own.

General Grant and the Seven Traitors.

From the N. Y. Herald. A radical organ and a sort of Johnson-conservative-half-way-Doolittle Republican organ have been debating the important question whether the appointment of Senator Doolittle to a place in General Grant's Cabinet would be a proper thing, and from the weight of the argument against him we infer that Doolittle is dished, and that henceforth his fortunes are identified with the firm of Johnson, Doolittle and Dixon and the Philadelphia Johnson Convention of 1866. But what of the seven Republican traitors, so called, who voted for Andy Johnson's acquittal, including Fessenden and Trumbull? What if General Grant should appoint one of these men to his Cabinet? He is perfectly free to do so. He is under no bonds against them. He is not in any way forewarned to the radicals. He is, in fact, a conservative, and it is quite possible that he may think Fessenden or Trumbull the right man for the Treasury or Attorney-General. Such an appointment, moreover, would fix the status of the new administration on a sound, conservative basis; and, sooner or later, it will come to this conclusion, if we are not mistaken in the leanings of General Grant.

The Man Who First Nominated Grant.

From the N. Y. Tribune. The man who first nominated General Grant for the Presidency is coming out beautiful. He is quite numerous, and co-extensive with this great and glorious country in which it is our privilege to live. His simultaneous appearance in every State of the Union, and the rapidity with which he replenishes his

species, justly excite our wonder and admiration. We cannot have too much of a being so far-sighted and prophetic. The man who first nominated Grant was born in Texas, of poor but respectable parents; he was also born in Maine, and drew his first breath among the orange trees of Florida; he is a native of Vermont, and first saw the light in the picturesque valleys of Virginia; Ohio may proudly claim him as her son, and at the time of his birth his rich but respectable progenitors resided in Cattaraugus county, New York; he is a staple production of Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Missouri, Iowa, Michigan, Delaware, Wisconsin, California, and other States, and at different periods from 1800 to 1845 was born in the various territories along the line of the Pacific Railroad, as far west as Utah, on a Mississippi steamboat, and at scattered points on the northern line, in a balloon, in a diving-bell, on Vancouver's Island, at the Astor House, and in New Jersey. In short, there is no place where he was not born, and for further information we refer the reader to "Lippincott's Universal Gazetteer," which contains the names of several hundred thousand towns, and "Colton's Map of North America," which shows that his birthplace is bounded by two oceans, by the Gulf of Mexico, and the Polar Sea.

It is singular that the man who first nominated Grant should have so long remained unknown. But prophets are seldom known till their predictions are fulfilled; they then become famous in the twinkling of an eye. The moment that Grant was elected naturally revealed the man who first nominated him. The man who first nominated Grant was a phrenologist who had the honor of examining the head of the infant General, who was then but six months old. We can prove that he instantly exclaimed—this was in 1822—"This child has a gigantic intellect; his organs indicate many military geniuses, he will undoubtedly become the President of the United States. I hereby nominate him for that office." This man was also a volunteer in the Mexican war, who, on beholding the manner in which Grant served his gun at Vera Cruz, exclaimed, "Capt. Grant is my candidate for the Presidency!" He is also a major in the Kentucky Home Guards; a brigadier in the Army of the Cumberland; an importer; a large number of members of Congress; the Governors of several States; President of the first Grant Clubs in New York, Boston, Philadelphia; many tobaccoists; the editor of the New York Herald; several thousand leading politicians; an editor or two, or two thousand; in short, we refer the reader for further information to the city directories of New York, Philadelphia, Oshkosh, Chicago, St. Louis, San Diego, Wilmington (Del.), Peoria (Ill.), and other cities in which these useful works—now of transcendent interest—are published. Therein are printed the several million names of the man who first nominated Grant, with his several million residences, and if the general desires to thank him—as he should desire—we respectfully advise him to buy several hundred copying presses, and set his staff to work sending off letters of grateful acknowledgment to the following effect:—

WASHINGTON, D. C., HEADQUARTERS OF THE U. S. ARMY.—My Dear Sir:—In 18— (here insert the name of the year), while I was yet (here insert an infant, a boy, a student, a farmer, a tanner, a storekeeper, a Captain, a Major, a Colonel, a general, as the case may be), and was residing in (Point Pleasant, West Point, Fort Brown, Detroit, St. Louis, Galena, Washington, as the case may be), you were the first man to nominate me for the Presidency. Please accept my thanks, and the appointment of (Postmaster, Assessor, Clerk, Whisky Inspector, Cabinet Officer, Consul, as the case may be) and believe me as ever, my dear (Smith, Jones, Brown, Jenkins, White, Green, Thompson, as the case may be), Your grateful friend, LEWIS S. GRANT.

(See Directories for full name.) The man who first nominated Grant would be delighted with such a letter as this, and, laying our hand upon our heart, we fervently declare that it is no more than his due.

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